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September 20, 1993

TO: Minerals File

FROM: D. Wayne Hedberg, Permit Supervisor *DWH*

RE: Site Inspection, Desert Sandscapes, Black Ridge #1 Mine, S/053/027, Washington County, Utah

Date of Inspection: September 16, 1993  
Time of Inspection: 9:50 - 10:35 a.m.  
Conditions: Sunny, warm  
Participants: Joseph Cassetta, Operator; Wayne Hedberg, DOGM

Purpose of Inspection: To evaluate the change in status since our last inspection of this site.

This site was active at the time of our visit. Mr. Cassetta indicated that this particular site was being utilized at the present time to help expedite a concern regarding the possible land exchange between the federal government and the state, that was pending in this area. Therefore, Mr. Cassetta was focusing all his efforts with the encouragement of the Bureau of Land Management to maximize his production from this area before the land exchange became final.

There are three areas that have been disturbed at this site. One area has been reclaimed by Mr. Cassetta during the spring of 1993. This was not actively ever mined. It was an older abandoned disturbance, relatively small quarry that has since been backfilled by the operator. There are two active areas now; both in Black Canyon. They are both immediately adjacent to a dry ephemeral wash, which is very sandy and is also used as the main access corridor to the sites. One site was being actively mined (the more northeastern site) at the time of our inspection. Mr. Mike Caruso of Joe's Rock Shop fain was the contract miner that was operating this site for Mr. Cassetta. They had one loader, a trackhoe excavator, air compressor, a small tracked winkie drill rig and a port-a-potty on the site. Mike Caruso and two other miners were actively excavating or removing the sandstone (picturerock) from the pit and loading it onto trailers.

The second disturbance which is located further down the canyon, approximately 200 yards and on the southwestern side of the canyon, has temporarily been suspended. Mr. Cassetta indicated that they had run out of the principle vein that was being mined. There is approximately 1 1/2 acres of disturbance at this particular site. Mr. Cassetta indicated he wasn't sure if they would continue to mine at this site and move further up the ridge, or whether the amount of overburden that would eventually have to be moved might prohibit further expansion at this site.





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Mr. Cassetta is encouraging his contract miners to mine contemporaneously. In essence, they are trying, to the extent possible, to reclaim as they go by pulling back the waste rock material back into the quarry area and regrading to the extent possible with the material that remains. The one site that has been reclaimed has apparently not been reseeded. Mr. Cassetta indicated that the BLM indicated that reseeding would not be necessary on these small, dry sites; that native vegetation would come back in. There is no salvaged topsoil at these sites either. They are basically mining a hard rock sandstone outcrop and there is some evidence that even without reseeding, some of the native weedy species are coming back in and starting to colonize on some of the regraded areas.

The active area is also about 1 1/2 - 2 acres in size and is a relatively clean operation. The operator is doing his best to minimize his disturbance at any given site to maintain his small mining status.

I told Mr. Cassetta that I was going to check with the BLM regarding reseeding of this site, as I was surprised to hear Mr. Cassetta indicate that Larry Gore, of the BLM, told him that reseeding would not be necessary. I indicated that from my dealings with Mr. Gore, in the past, that this seemed like an unusual direction from that agency, but that I would verify that this was or was not the case. I indicated to Mr. Cassetta that the state typically would require an operator to perform some sort of reseeding once the mine site had been regraded. Preferred seeding would be in the fall. Mr. Cassetta indicated he would be willing to scatter some seed on this site if given a seed mix recommendation.

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